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LETTER

TO

Miſs F - - d.

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LONDON:

Printed in the YEAR 1761.

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LETTER

Mrs F - - d.

MADAM,

WHEN a Lady does a Man the Favour to write to him, he would be thought very ungallant, should he be neglect to answer her Letter. And although

Printed in the YEAR 17[illegible]

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TO

Miſs *F - - d.*

MADAM,

WHEN a Lady does a Man the Favour to write to him, he would be thought very ungallant, ſhould he neglect to anſwer her Letter. And, although

although your Letter is addreſſed to - - - -, that is, to No-body; yet as the Town has been pleaſed to fill up the Blank with my Name, I pay ſuch a Defference to their Judgment, and am ſo unwilling to decline any Favour from a Lady of your Beauty and diſtinguiſhed Merit, that I accept your Letter as addreſſed to me; and ſhall do myſelf the Pleaſure of returning you the following Anſwer.

I CAN'T avoid taking Notice of ſeveral ſarcaſtical Expreſſions in your Letter, namely, *Age*, *aged Cheeks*, *old Man*, *old enough to be your Grandfather*, &c. However, I could never find in my Heart to be angry with a young, and a pretty Woman. All their little froward, and pettiſh Expreſſions, are to be conſidered as Shades in Painting, or Diſcords in Muſick;

ſick; and only ſerve to ſet off and heighten their milder beauties; which, if they were not a little contraſted, would appear with leſs Life and Spirit.

THAT my firſt Acquaintance with you began at *Bath*, I do not deny; but that I promiſed you any Chance of Succeſs in a Matter you then had in View, upon my Honour I never did; and if your Father left you at *Bath*, with any Views to your imaginary Preferment, it is not my Fault: for ſurely I am not to be accountable for his Foibles or Abſurdities.

IT is no uncommon Foible for young Women, to fancy every Man who makes them a Compliment, is in Love with them: Give me Leave to ſay, that you were ſubject to this Foible, otherwiſe you never could

could have ſo miſconſtrued my Conduct towards you.

THE Notice I took of you at that Time, aroſe from a Benevolence in my Nature towards a very young Woman, as you then was; whoſe Education had been very ſingular; whoſe Talents were very great; but who was as much unacquainted with the World as a Child of five Years of Age; and whoſe Judgment had been miſled by thoſe, whom you conſider'd your Friends. I found you had provoked the Envy of ſeveral grown Miſſes and their Mamma's, by your having a whiter Hand than uſual, and your playing a little better on the Guittar, than the Generality of Miſſes do.

I OBSERVED you to be harmleſs, undeſigning, and unſuſpicious (as you yourſelf ſay)

ſay) turned out into a wide and wicked World, without any Friend who was able to direct or adviſe you; and for Want of good Advice, falling into ſome little Abſurdities, and thereby giving the Ladies I have mentioned, Opportunities of exerciſing their ridiculing Talents at your Expence; and all this while your imaginary Female Friends, inſtead of ſetting you right, were giving you a ſtronger Biaſs to the wrong Side. I therefore may ſay with Truth, in your own Words, that I eſteemed and pitied you, but you are not to look upon that Saying of *Dryden's*,

"Pity melts the Soul to Love,"

as an Axiom univerſally true.

THAT I may have been upon my Knees to you, I do not deny; but never on the Score of Love, unleſs the ſolliciting a Love

Song in that Posture can be deem'd so; besides, at that Time you know, your own Father could obtain one no other Way: That I should attempt to entertain you with my Triumphs over other Women, is not at all likely, for, upon my Honour, I never had any but my Wife to triumph over, and I hope I may be allowed to say, it is notorious I never triumphed over her.

That you liked staying at *Bath*, and that you might delude your silly Father, by making him believe it might contribute to your future Interest, is very natural to suppose; but that my Offers of Service, or Friendship, was the true Cause, I absolutely deny; or that I offer'd you Eight Hundred Pounds a Year on any Consideration whatever, when you came to Town; or my Hand,

Hand, when Providence ſhould enable me. I will not contradict ſuch abſurd Aſſertions; they muſt and will overturn themſelves.

It is true, when you came to Town, I viſited you as other People of Rank did; not oftener,--and then only partook, as they did, of your Muſical Entertainments: And as to a Coronet-Chariot, that is out of the Queſtion, for you know (Gout excepted) I always came on Horſeback. Your Father, it is true, has ſometimes left me alone with you, and ſent your Toad-eater out of the Way: But what trifling Converſation then paſs'd between us, I cannot at this Diſtance of Time recollect.

And, perhaps, riding in the Wind, as my Eyes are weak, might occaſion them

to water my Cheeks; for, upon my Honour, no Tears aroſe from Love, Grief, or Trouble. It is well known I was not ſingular in adviſing you not to meet a certain great Perſon at the Houſe of a Lady of Reputation, &c. You know your Father, and all your Friends were mightily averſe to it, as well as me; and, upon my Honour, it did not ariſe from the leaſt Spark of Jealouſy; but you have a ſingular Manner of conſtruing all my Actions into Attention to myſelf.

Who but you could have turned my ſending you a Bit of Pig-Meat into Ridicule? That was baſe and ungrateful! You are pleaſed to cenſure it, as an odd, firſt, and only Preſent, from a L--d to his beloved Miſtreſs. But your unknown, poetical Friend, whoſe very ingenious Ballad

adds

adds Luſtre to your Epiſtle, which of itſelf is certainly extremely brilliant; and who, I doubt not, has read *Sandy*'s Tranſlation of *Ovid*'s *Metamorphoſes*, could have told you, that the Preſent is not without Precedent; for that my Lord *Meleager* made Miſs *Atalanta*, his beloved Miſtreſs, a firſt and only Preſent of a Boar's-Head. This, Madam, is what your Father, and the reſt of the raſcally Profeſſion of the Law, would call a Caſe in Point.

THE Truth is, I ſent you the Boar's-Head, becauſe I perceived you loved it; and when I ſent it, I inſiſt upon it (for I can inſiſt as well as you) it was perfectly ſweet; nor was it the ſame you ſo often met at my table, but freſh taken out of the Pickle the very Morning it was ſent. This Piece of Ingratitude in you, is ſo provok-

ing,

ing, that I can ſcarce keep my Temper, or confine my Pen within the Bounds of that Decency of Expreſſion, that is in the firſt Place due to myſelf, and in the next due to you: Beſides, Madam, I could prove, if it were worth while, that the Pig-Meat was not only ſweet when I ſent it, but continued ſo many Days after; and that your Father boaſted to my L———d M———r, that I had ſent you ſuch a Preſent; my L———d M———r told little L-----y M———s of it, and ſhe longed for a Bit of it; had it; and eat it.

But I have ſaid too much about ſuch a falſe and ungrateful Return to my kind Attention towards you, as my Servants can teſtify; and, therefore, as I have ſhewn, that this Charge is abſolutely void of Truth, I think I ſhall have no Difficulty to prevail

on

on every impartial Reader to diſcredit every Thing elſe you have advanced; for he or ſhe that will deviate from Truth, though it be in the moſt trifling Circumſtance, have no Right to be credited in Matters of Importance; and if I ſhew, as I think I have, that the Pig-Meat was good not only when ſent, but ſeveral Days after; that my L------d M-------r heard of it, and that little L———y M———ſs eat of it; I have a Right to overturn every other Aſſertion you have advanced, by ſaying, Upon my Honour it is all falſe.

The Reſentment of your Relations towards you, have nothing to do with me, nor I with them; and therefore I don't underſtand what you mean by addreſſing a Letter to me, that ſeems more to concern others than me, to whom it is addreſſed. If your

phyſical

phyſical Uncle renounces you, or your Father ſollicits your Return, what's that to me? Why is he to be wounded through my Side? And why is your Epiſtle loaded with Invectives againſt your Relations, without being addreſſed to them? But this is of a Piece with the whole Tenor of your Proceeding.

I WILL, however, let you into a Secret, to prevent you wondering at this renouncing Faculty in your Family: It is a Family Failing: Your U---e in *Jamaica* has renounced you all. He left *England* to avoid ſuch Connections; and where he is, denies being any Ways related to the *O---d B----y* Sollicitor, or to your Kinſman Dr. *Chalk-liker*; and though they all know his bald-faced Affinity, yet his preſent Station puts him one Remove above being told ſo.

BUT,

BUT, to return to your Charges againſt me: You ſay you was determined to leave your Father's Houſe, partly on my Account, and for ſome other Reaſons. The latter I grant. You proceed to ſay, that conſidering me the firſt and beſt Friend you had, you informed me with your Scheme, and deſired my Countenance and Protection, but was greatly ſhocked to find by my Anſwer, that I refuſed you a Subſcription of five Guineas; eſpecially, as it was aſked with Diffidence and Humility, and was to contribute to your future Support. You have given the Reply to this Requeſt of yours, as your Readers are to underſtand in my own Words: If ſo, where is the Refuſal? Did I ſay, I would not ſubſcribe? No: I only ſaid, for Reaſons which I then thought ſubſtantial ones, that I entirely

diſapproved of your Scheme, but I did not refuſe my Money; and had you ſent again, you certainly would have had it.

THAT you did ſing at my Houſe often, I do not deny; but you did alſo at many others; and therefore in this Requeſt I was not ſingular. And that my Relations were to regulate their Amuſements with Attention to your Intereſt, is what did not then occur to me; but I think you a little ſingular in imagining, there could be the leaſt Deſign, in what, upon my Ho- Honour, was meer Accident: And I do aſſure you, that had you wrote me a Letter to have received you on the Terms you aſk me, I ſhould have made you juſt the ſame Reply I did concerning your Muſical Scheme. There is nothing more in your declamatory Epiſtle worth replying to;

to; and, therefore, I ſhall conlude, with begging your Acceptance, in good Part, of a few golden Rules (inſtead of Guineas) which I now have in my Head. And,

First, Never appeal to the Public on any Occaſion. The Public will be pleaſed with any Performance, be it ever ſo ridiculous, eſpecially if it contains Scandal; but they will cenſure the Author, though it were ever ſo ſenſible. Beſides, it's an improper Step for a young Woman: You had better ſing to the Public, than write to them. On all Accounts, controverſial Writing is not your Talent. Every Man who beholds you, muſt ſee Graces the moſt attractive, the moſt ſweet, the moſt bewitching. Every Man who hears your ſweet, melifluous Voice, muſt declare, that it ought never to be employed, but in uttering

the ſoft Accents of Love. Every Man who ſees a Pen in that delicate, ſoft, white Hand, from which I have ſo often drawn the Glove, with as much Pleaſure as Miſers in Secret lift the Lids of their Coffers, to view their Treaſures; every Man I ſay, who ſees a Pen in that Hand, cannot avoid forming an Idea of *Venus* feathering of Love's Arrows: But I find I relapſe and grow warm, and too much diſpoſed to the ſublime; all I mean is, to adviſe you not to quit what you confeſſedly excel in, for what is infinitely leſs valuable in itſelf, and for which you have no ſhining Talent.

If your Relations are willing and deſirous of being reconciled to you, embrace the Occaſion: There is much due to a Father, though he be ever ſo bad; if he has injured you, or you him, the beſt

Means

Means to reconcile yourſelf to God and his Forgiveneſs, is to begin by a thorough Reconciliation to each other.

I WILL ſet the firſt Example, in aſſuring you, I forgive you; for you muſt ſee, how much Cauſe I have to be offended, to have ſuch unwarrantable Charges exhibited againſt me. To be introduced dancing the Heys, like the Sun, Moon, and Earth, in the *Rehearſal*, with ſuch Company as your Father and Uncle, is no very pleaſing Reflection; and, therefore, I have ſome Right to recommend Unanimity to you all, as the only Means of Contentment to you, your Father, your Uncle, your Grandmother, and to your aged and affectionate Grand-father.

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POSTSCRIPT.

THE MONTHLY CRITIC is pleaſed to ſay, ſpeaking of your Letter, "Should "this young Lady have told her Tale "with as much Candour as Spirit, we "make no Doubt but the Town will eſ- "pouſe her Quarrel, and warmly reſent "the mean Arts of a Nobleman to ſe- "duce her Innocence, deſtroy her Cha- "racter, blaſt her Hopes, and deprive the "Public of much agreeable Entertain- "ment, in Revenge of her refuſing to "gratify his ſuper-annuated, impotent "Deſires."

As I have ſhewn above, with how little Candour your Tale is told, I am not aſhamed

aſhamed to annex the Critic's Remark; for it is very evident to me, that he doubts every Syllable of your Narration. It is poſſible a Fib may be told with Spirit, and the Truth without; and therefore I will condeſcend to beſpeak his Favour as you did, in acknowledging my Performance has no Merit but Truth, and Truth without Spirit; and for this he ought to make great Allowance.

You are young; I am, he ſays, old; but above all, I am innocent; nor do I lay any Streſs on the Merit of my Performance; but fix the Price in Proportion with yours, to an equal Quantity of Truth for Falſhood: But to ſhew you how diſintereſted I am, if you will agree to ſend your Net-Profit to the *Magdalen-Houſe*, I will give mine to the *Foundling-Hoſpital*.

F I N I S.

B L